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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

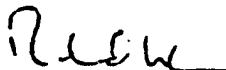
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFIB-14.2/15
16 July 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: NFIB Principals
FROM: Richard Lehman
Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council
SUBJECT: Procedures for Production of NIEs and SNIEs

At the NFIB meeting of 7 July, the DCI established a Working Group on Procedures (chaired by Chairman, NIC with representatives from INR, DIA and CIA) with instructions that it report back to NFIB at its next meeting. The attached draft was prepared on the basis of Working Group discussion and has been approved by the DDCI for discussions at the NFIB meeting on 21 July.


Richard Lehman

Attachment:
Procedures for Production
of NIEs and SNIEs, dated 15 July 1981

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Categories of Estimates

I. Those oriented to a current event or policy issue. The need for such an estimate will normally arise from the policy formulation process. To be useful, such estimates must be brief and timely. Papers directed at relatively narrow questions and on particularly short deadlines will normally be produced as SNIEs. This category includes "Contingency" estimates, e.g., "What would be the reaction if the US did X?" There will also be a number of broader NIE's, however, particularly in the political and economic fields, that fall in the category of event or policy-issue papers. Production will be governed by the "fast track" procedures discussed below (page 4).

II. NIE's devoted to potential future policy concerns, e.g., Yugoslavia after Tito. Papers in this category will take somewhat longer to prepare than those tied to more immediate concerns, and may include extensive back-up analysis. Production will be governed by more deliberate procedures (see page 6). The number of Category II NIE's should decrease in coming months as the number of Category I increases.

III. The major military NIE's. Military estimates (and some other important Soviet estimates) will be produced on a periodic schedule approved by the DCI after consultation with NFIR (see page 8).

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Content of Interagency Assessments

In preparing such assessments, Principals, Chairmen of estimates, and drafters shall assure that drafts:

- Are as directly relevant to ongoing policy concerns as possible, within the ground rules of appropriate discussion by intelligence officers. They should be written in awareness of the US role in the given situations, analyze the degree to which these situations may be susceptible to the influence of the US or its friends, and address the significance of various outcomes for US interests.
- Contain as much estimative thrust as possible, including where appropriate possible alternative future developments.
- Integrate policy, military, economic and other factors -- especially with respect to economic forces and to the broader political purposes of military power.
- Avoid secondary issues and unnecessary detail.
- Contain, as has been the practice, any alternative or dissenting views.

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Category I Fast-Track Procedures

Initiation. Preparation of Category I papers may be proposed to the DCI by any senior officer, although the concerned NIO is expected to anticipate the need for such estimates through his participation in the policy formulation process. If the DCI approves, the Chairman NIC will immediately notify NFIB Principals by telephone or LDX, designating a responsible NIO as Chairman of the estimate and requesting that each Principal name a single qualified officer to represent him in the coordination process. Representatives should have access to and be able to speak for their Principal.

Terms of Reference (TORs)/Concept Papers. The estimate Chairman will immediately prepare draft TORs, check them out with the requester and the DCI, and coordinate them with the representatives by telephone and LDX. For SNIE's these steps should take no more than 24 hours, for NIEs in Category I no more than 3 days.

Drafting Responsibilities. The Chairman will in the course of establishing TORs negotiate with the representatives to identify drafters and contributors who are both qualified and available. It will be the responsibility of the Principals to free assigned drafters and contributors from conflicting duties until the draft is completed. For SNIE's this should regularly require no more than two days, for NIE's in Category I, five days.

Format. Each draft estimate (NIE or SNIE) will regularly consist of a very brief (one printed page) Summary Conclusions, and the Estimate proper (no more than five pages for an SNIE and ten for an NIE). Where appropriate and essential, annexes may be appended.

Coordination. When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives for coordination, normally by LDX. Representatives should immediately seek the views of their Principals. For SNIE's, the Chairman will when time permits convene a representatives meeting to coordinate the paper, but in extreme cases will coordinate by telephone. In any case the time required should not be more than two days. For Category I NIE's, representatives will normally meet and coordination should be complete in no more than five days.

NFIB Consideration. Category I estimates will normally be reviewed by the DCI at this stage. Concurrence of the Principals in SNIE's may then be obtained by telephone or through a special NFIB meeting. This process should take no more than 24 hours and may be accomplished in the course of coordination. Category I NIE's usually will be considered at a regular NFIB meeting if conveniently scheduled, or at a special meeting. No more than three days should be required.

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Category II Procedures

Initiation. NIE's in Category II will normally be proposed by the NIC and scheduled well in advance, although any NFIB principal or senior policy officer may request one. The schedule will be considered by NFIB quarterly and approved by the DCI. Should an addition to or deletion from the schedule be proposed, Principals will be given an opportunity to comment prior to decision by the DCI. Before work begins on a paper, the Chairman, NIC is responsible for designating an NIO as Chairman and notifying the Principals. Each Principal in turn will designate a single knowledgeable officer fully empowered to represent him in preparation of the estimate.

Terms of Reference/Concept Paper. The estimate Chairman will prepare draft TORs. He will assure that before they are sent out to the agency representatives, these papers have been checked out with the policy officers concerned and principal users and have been submitted to the DCI for his review. Once these papers go out to the representatives, the latter will be requested to review them with their Principals before the representatives come to the coordination meetings. The usual time to be given for such review, prior to the meetings of the representatives, will be one week. In cases where later circumstances warrant significant changes in the initial purpose, scope, concept, or TORs of a given paper, the Chairman will ensure that these changes have the approval of the DCI and the NFIB Principals.

Drafting Responsibilities. The Chairman will, in the course of preparing and coordinating TORs, identify drafting officers and arrange for

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contributions from individual agencies. It will be the responsibility of each Principal to ensure that designated drafters from his agency are freed from conflicting duties and to ensure that contributions assigned to his agency are delivered on schedule. Drafts should regularly be completed within one month.

Format. Each draft NIE will normally consist of three entities: (1) the basic estimate, (2) a shorter Key Judgments section, and (3) a very brief (one page, in most instances) Summary Conclusions. All three entities will be regularly coordinated by the Agency representatives. When published, however, the first volume of the NIE will consist only of two portions: that is, the Key Judgments become the estimate; the Summary Conclusions become the executive summary. This package should be no more than 15 printed pages in length. The initial basic estimate will generally be published as backup analysis in an accompanying Volume II. There will, of course, be occasions where the length or complexity of the estimate will necessitate variations on this concept.

Coordination. When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives. The latter will be given two weeks to consult with their respective Principals on the content of a draft before the representatives meet for coordination with the paper's Chairman. The representatives will meet on consecutive working days for as long as necessary to complete coordination. Discussion at these meetings will center on ironing out questions of fact, examining the principal assessments of the given paper, and identifying main areas of agreement or disagreement/dissent.

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If major revisions are necessary, there can be a cleanup meeting to review the final text; new issues will not be raised at cleanup meetings. Any major issues not resolved at representatives' meetings will be examined at NFIB by the DCI and the Principals. On occasion the representatives may coordinate and forward Volume I before turning their attention to Volume II.

NFIB Consideration. Volume I as coordinated by the representatives (that is, Summary Conclusions and Key Judgments, together with any dissents or unresolved issues) will go to the DCI for approval and distribution to the Principals, who will be given at least seven working days to review the final draft. It will be scheduled for the next formal meeting of NFIB thereafter. At NFIB discussion will center on the estimate's major questions, with any necessary editorial or minor fixes to be done subsequently under the direction of C/NIC and the paper's Chairman, as directed at NFIB by the DCI. The Chairman will also be responsible for conforming a coordinated Volume II to Volume I. Volume II will be published within one month after Volume I.

Category III Procedures

The procedures outlined above for Category II in general apply also to Category III. These papers are likely to be longer (sometimes more than two volumes) and more complex than those in Category II, and arrangements for their production may involve an elaborate structure of working groups and subgroups, DCI Committees, etc. They will also take more time to prepare. Nonetheless, every effort will be made to move them along expeditiously, and to keep Volume I concise and policy-oriented. Present production of

General

These procedures should provide a maximum of one week for the production of SNIE's, three weeks for Category I NIE's, and three to four months for the production of Volume I of Category II and most Category III NIE's. Principals will, of course, retain their right of dissent in all cases and categories of estimates.

After publication of an SNIE or NIE, the estimate Chairman will convene the representatives for a review of NFIB discussion of the process, and of the final document. This meeting should focus on identifying gaps in collection or analysis for future reference. The Chairman will be responsible for taking further action through appropriate channels to fill such gaps.

Any of these procedures may be abridged by C/NIC when an estimate is needed more quickly than they will permit. The only essential conditions are that each agency have an opportunity to dissent, and that the DCI approve the final product.